



MINUTES
Preservation Commission
Monday, January 8th, 2024
City Hall/Civic Center – 5:30 p.m.

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1. **Roll Call:** Ms. Gibson called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

Members Present: Rhodes, Ashby, Brown, Bittle, Zurlinden, Falcone, Grant, Young, Rye-Sanders (ex-officio)

Members Absent: Norris-Price

Staff Present: Gibson

Guests: None

2. **Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Brown made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 13th, 2023 meeting, seconded by Mr. Rhodes. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

3. **Communication and Reports:**

- a. Educational and Technical Assistance Committee
 - a. No Report
- b. Nomination and Hardship Committee
 - a. No Report
- c. Work Plan Committee
 - a. No Report
- d. Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
 - a. No Report
- e. Preservation Month Subcommittee
 - a. No Report

4. **Old Business:**

There was none.

5. **New Business:**

- a. Continue discussion on NW Preservation District – Ms. Gibson passed out the packet from the November meeting, which included information such as the proposed NW Preservation District map, general preservation district information, and the process behind designating a preservation district. Ms. Gibson opened the topic up for discussion and asked the Commissioners their thoughts on the proposed district. Mr. Rhodes asked about the district boundary and why it stopped at Poplar and did not continue to University. Mr. Zurlinden discussed the area in question and explained his reasoning for making the boundary map the way he did. Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Zurlinden discussed the

character and inclusion of various points on the map. The Commissioners discussed various properties that are included or that they think should be included in the district boundary. Mr. Rhodes clarified that the district boundary must be contiguous and houses cannot be spot picked to be included in the district. Ms. Gibson stated that the district boundaries are not set in stone and largely depend on signatures from residents. Ms. Gibson said that properties that fall outside the district boundary could be spot selected for historic designation if needed. Mr. Rhodes discussed the difference between “contributing” and “non-contributing” structures. Mr. Rhodes discussed a subcommittee meeting to create progress on the preservation district designation, since the full Commission meets only once per month. Ms. Gibson stated that if 3 or more members meet, there must be minutes for the meeting and the meeting must be recorded. Mr. Zurlinden asked if the map could be passed to a subcommittee to discuss and edit. Mr. Grant asked if properties north of Sycamore Street would be considered contributing or non-contributing structures. Ms. Gibson stated that the time periods seem to be vastly different, and asked if that should be a factor into determining the district’s boundary. Mr. Rhodes stated that it could, but also that things like platted neighborhoods and neighborhood associations could be a factor to look at. Mr. Rhodes suggested the idea of a Sycamore Street district if there were many historic houses that did not fit the current district being discussed that still deserved designation. Mr. Grant discussed the houses along Oak Street and Almond Street that are “Turn of Century” in style, while the houses north of Sycamore are bungalows with much a different architectural style. Mr. Grant expressed his interest in being in the subcommittee. Ms. Falcone said that a subcommittee would be a good idea, but also suggested accepting the boundary map as is. Mr. Rhodes asked if when letters were sent out to neighborhood residents if only those in the current suggested boundary would be receiving letters or also those that are just outside the district boundary. Ms. Gibson stated that she would double check to see who would be included in receiving letters. Ms. Gibson stated that the Nomination and Hardship Committee would be the appropriate subcommittee to review the preservation district plans. The Nomination and Hardship Committee includes Mr. Grant, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Zurlinden, Ms. Brown, and Ms. Falcone. Mr. Young asked when an informational meeting would be held, and if it were before or after collecting signatures. Mr. Grant said that the informational meeting would be a good opportunity to collect signatures from residents. Ms. Rye-Sanders asked what the Nomination and Hardship Committee does. Mr. Grant stated that the committee would review the proposed district and set up criteria for the district. Ms. Gibson read the duties for the Nomination and Hardship Committee from the Commission bylaws.

Mr. Rhodes asked if the Commissioners were alright with making a motion on the proposed boundary as it stands. There was agreement amongst the Commissioners. Mr. Rhodes asked for a motion. Mr. Grant made a motion that the Preservation Commission adopt the proposed boundary of the Northwest Preservation District, seconded by Mr. Zurlinden. The Commissioners agreed via voice vote, sans Mr. Ashby who voiced his opposition. Mr. Ashby voiced his opposition, stating that he thought the current boundary was too large of an area and needed to be more specific in its intent. Ms. Gibson asked if there were any specific areas he had in mind to remove. Mr. Ashby stated that he did not, just that he had general concern that the area included many properties owned by questionable landlords and neglected homeowners. Ms. Brown suggested that once the Commission reached the signature step of the process, that the

size of the district could be reduced in size determined by those property owners that sign. Mr. Zurlinden stated that he thought the proposed boundary was redeemable for what the Commission is trying to accomplish and that there were many contributing structures. Mr. Zurlinden stated that his hope was that through the designation of the historic district, some houses that have fallen into disrepair may have an opportunity to be brought back to former glory. Mr. Rhodes asked if Mr. Zurlinden had an idea of what the neighborhood felt, since he is a resident of Oak Street. Mr. Zurlinden stated that it is a mix of rental properties and people who own and care about their homes. Ms. Brown stated that having grant opportunities available to discuss with residents would be helpful. Mr. Young suggested practicing some conversational points and answers to frequently asked questions before the informational meeting. Ms. Gibson stated that she could send out an informational letter inviting residents to the informational meeting. Ms. Falcone suggested waiting until the informational meeting to try to obtain signatures so that any questions residents may have can be answered collectively. Mr. Rhodes discussed the enforcement of district character and possible penalties for those that disrupt the character of the district.

6. Comments from the Public, Commission Members, or Staff:

Mr. Grant discussed updates from the Founders Park Committee.

Mr. Grant reminded the Commissioners that Covid-19 is on the rise again and to be mindful of their health and wellness.

7. Adjournment:

Ms. Brown made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Grant. The meeting was adjourned.